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The Farmer And The Goddess

A Modern Story Of Rebirth

Dorothy Morrison (http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/8774)

The night was quiet and peaceful, with only the occasional call of a whippoorwill to break the tranquil silence. The Moon was an iridescent ball of silver perched high in the heavens, illuminating the Earth below. The sky, a lovely shade of midnight blue, was sparsely speckled with the twinkle of stars. I peered out my window, enchanted by the beauty of the night. As my eyes wandered, they came to rest upon the corn field - the corn field that had broken my very heart.

In the beginning, I had worked patiently and diligently tending the soil. I tilled it - turning it over and over, so that the new could surface and the old could rest. I carefully pulled away the weeds and the remnants of the old crop to make the field ready for new planting. I fertilized and nurtured it, smoothed and moistened it. Day after day, I toiled to make it ready. Finally, I plowed it into even rows and lovingly planted it.

Every day, I tended the seed and watched for new sprouts. Tenaciously, I ripped the weeds from Earth that would rob the seeds of the nutrients necessary for their growth. And then one day, I saw it - a single, solitary sprout that had pushed its way through the soil! Within the week, the entire field was covered with a very thin mesh of green, and I felt a joy in my heart that words cannot describe! The hard work, the aching muscles, and the tender care with which I had nurtured the field was not in vain - the Earth which I loved had given birth, and was alive in the greening of the seed I had sown.

Daily, I worked in the field, delighting in the growth of the corn - reveling in its freshness - exulting in the part I had played in its birth. The rains came down, drenching the earth and the roots grew deep. The sun shone brightly on the young plants and they grew tall, reaching for the sky. Ears began to form on the stalks, and all was well with the crop.

But then the drought arrived, and the rains came no more. The sun still beamed brightly, and the roots moved deeper and deeper into the Earth in their desperate quest to find water. Alas, there was not a single drop left with which they could quench their thirst. The once luxuriant green leaves began to yellow and wither. The stalks which had stood so

proudly against the sky began to shrivel and crack, and the tender ears, so newly born, dried up in death. Yes, the corn which I had helped to birth - that which I had loved so dearly - was gone. Dried up. Dead.

A tear fell from my eye as I stood looking at the field that night, remembering. A gentle breeze rustled through the old and withered stalks as I wiped away the tear. And then...I saw something! Or was it someone? Slowly and silently I crept toward the corn field to take a better look. I felt my heart beating faster and faster, as panic began to consume me. After all, it was nearly midnight and too late for visitors! Whomever was in the field was obviously up to no good, and I wanted them to leave immediately! My legs moved faster and faster - more quickly than I had dreamed they were capable - until I was, indeed, on a dead run! When I reached the old oak tree that shaded the northern edge of the field, I opened my mouth to shout my displeasure at the trespasser; however, I fell silent as my eyes focused on the sight, and my mouth gaped wide. For there, in the center of the corn field, was a young woman in white - her hair as gold as the maize - glowing in the shimmering iridescence of the moonlight!

Questions ravaged my tired brain, as I tried to assess the situation and size up the intruder. Who was She? What was She doing there? Surely She knew She was trespassing - and most certainly She knew that it was illegal! As much as I wished to call out to Her, I was mesmerized by Her very presence and found that I could say nothing. Helplessly, I watched as She moved through the rows of death. She stopped to caress a dry and withered leaf, and then smiling, held it to her cheek. Gently, She reached out and wrapped Her arms about the cracked, brown stalk, hugging it closely to Her breast. She released the stalk and bent down to look at one of the ears - perfectly formed, but shriveled in its deathly demise. Quickly, She snapped the ear from its stalk, tugged away its husk and swiftly moved toward the outside perimeter of the field.

Holding the ear of corn high above Her golden head, She began to dance upon the barren Earth. As if in slow motion, She twirled about the outside edges of the field, as she softly hummed an unfamiliar tune. Round and round the field She danced, picking up momentum as She worked Her way toward the center. Louder and louder She sang, the volume increasing as Her feet flew faster and continued to spiral toward the center. Within the matter of a few seconds, She had become a whirling dervish - dancing with such wild abandon that the kernels of corn were loosed from their cob, flying helter-skelter across the field! She glistened in the moonlight as droplets of perspiration formed upon Her body, and in the frenzy of Her dance, they too, were flung upon the Earth. Her feet and voice reached the ultimate crescendo at the center of the corn field, and She fell upon the ground in total exhaustion.

All was silent. The sounds of the nocturnal creatures had been stilled. All was enveloped in an unnatural hush - as if time itself, had stopped. She lay on the Earth, unbreathing, unmoving, immobile - as still as Death, itself! I stared at Her in horror, the panic which I had forgotten, rushing back into my brain with full force. Was She all right? Good Heavens! Was She dead??

Finally, I gathered my wits about me, found my feet and rushed toward the center of the corn field, where She had fallen in collapse. My heart beating wildly, I reached out to Her - but She was gone! She had disappeared into the very ether! All that was left in Her place was a single corn cob, void of its kernels - the kernels which had flung from their resting place in the midst of the Lady's spiral dance.

The sun was shining hotly on my face as I rubbed my sleepy eyes into total alertness. Where was I? This didn't feel like my bed! What was causing this blinding light? I was soaked to the bone! Just what the hell was happening here? Cautiously, I opened my eyes and surveyed my surroundings. To my dismay, I was lying smack-dab in the middle of the corn field and my head was resting in a rather large mud puddle. Clenched tightly in my fist, like some precious jewel in need of protection, was a solitary corn cob. I scrambled to my feet and tried in desperation to collect my thoughts. What was I doing here? Had I lost my mind?

And then...I remembered! I remembered the cornfield in the moonlight - the Lady and the dance. I also remembered how Her drops of perspiration had dropped to the ground in the frenzy of Her movements. I looked at my feet and the Earth beneath them. Joy and wonder rose in my heart. It had rained! Merciful Heavens! It had rained - the Earth was soaked with moisture - the drought was over!

Gleefully, I ran through the cornfield, feeling my bare toes dig into the wet Earth - the same Earth which had been so cracked and dry and barren just yesterday. I ran in joy. I ran in ecstasy. I ran in sheer celebration of the soil's return to richness - and then, I stopped dead in my tracks. Something was amiss. Something had changed. Something was quite unlike it had been before. Scanning the field, I realized that it was once again covered with delicate green mesh of newly sprouting corn! In awe, I reached down to cradle a newly-formed sprout and as my fingers touched the verdant green leaf, a feminine voice began to speak:

"You were born of me! You are my child and at death you shall return to me. Fear not of death, dear one, for within its realm I shall bring you new life! Just as the corn lives again - so shall it be with you! For all that falls shall rise again, and that which dies shall be blessed with the gift of rebirth - the gift of My love!"

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